

NARRATIVE OF THE

Imprisonment and Tryal of Mr. *David Lewis*,
Priest of the Society of *Jesus*.

Written by himself.

At the Assizes held at *Monmouth March 28. 1679.*

To which is annexed

His last S P E E C H at the Place of Execution,
August 27. 1679.

After my full thirty years poor missionary Labours in *South-Wales*, on Sunday morning, a little before day, being the 17th of November 1678. I was taken by six Armed Men, sent by Mr. *John Arnold*, and Mr. *Charles Price*, till then two my very good Friends and Acquaintance, I was taken in a little House, in the Parish of St. *Michael-Lantarnam*, in the County of *Monmouth*. From thence by the Soldiers, together with what Church-stuff of mine they there found, carried I was to the House of Mr. *Charles Price* in *Llanffoyt*, where I found Mr. *Thomas Lewis* of St. *Peere*, Mr. *John Arnold*, and Mr. *Charles Price* himself, who, about two of the Clock in the Afternoon, with their Servants, to the number of a Dozen Horse, all Armed, conducted me to the *Golden-Lyon* in *Abergavenny*; at the entring whereof, some meeting Mr. *Arnold*, saluted him, and loudly said, Good News, Good News, *Coxiers* the pretended Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury* is taken in *Ireland*; and we, said Mr. *Arnold*, have taken the pretended Bishop of *Llandaff*; together with them I went up to a Chamber, a Guard being put upon the Door, immediately they sent for Mr. *William Jones*, Recorder of the Town, and Justice of Peace, to assist with the rest, at my Examination and Commitment; Mr. *Price* telling me, I was not to be my own Accuser, Mr. *Arnold* called for one *William James*, (one who had been my Servant four years, and then there present) who upon Oath depoled, That he had seen me at Mass at least twenty times, whereupon my Commitment was drawn and signed by Mr. *Thomas Lewis*, Mr. *Charles Price*, and Mr. *William Jones*, and Committed. Here Mr. *Thomas Lewis* ask'd me, upon my Word, Had I any hand in the late Horrid Plot? I answered, upon my Word, and if he pleas'd, upon my Oath, I had none; whereupon Mr. *Arnold* said, That with us it was no Oath to swear on their Bibles; and I desir'd him to pick and choose his Bible, I was ready to swear.

Being Committed, after Supper it was proposed to me, by Mr. *Lewis* of St. *Peere*, Whether that Night there in the *Lyon* I would lodge under a Guard, or go with Mr. *Arnold* to his House, where Mr. *Arnold* assur'd me, I should be most civilly entertain'd; I referred my self unto them, Why, then said Mr. *Lewis* of St. *Peere*, by consent, Mr. *Arnold*, let my Name-sake be your Guest this night; content said All. About ten at night, with Mr. *Arnold* and his Armed Servants, out of the *Lyon* I went to take Horse in the Street, where, being Moon-light, a Multitude of People,

out of curiosity, expected to see me. At Mr. Arnold's House I arrived between eleven and twelve of the Clock at night, where soon after I was conducted to my Chamber, in which two Servants, strong Men, lay also on a Pallat all night to secure me: Next Morning, rising about seven, my Mornings Draught was brought me: Immediately follow'd Mr. Arnold himself, and kindly ask'd me, how I retid that night; after three or four Turns about the Chamber, and my thanks for his Favours, he went down, and about half an hour after he sends up his Man unto me, and by him desires me to walk down; down I went, and in the Hall I found Mr. Arnold with several Abergavenny Constables, Charging of Guns. There walking with him, he would have invited me to the next Room, there to shew me his Baby, as he called it, which was a Ridiculous Figure of the Pope; I well understanding his meaning, waved the Discourse, and fairly took my leave; to Horse I went, Mr. Arnold accompanying me, with the Armed Constables; but when to my Horse I came, I perceived an Armed Soldier, called Kirby, (who three Months after murdered his own Father) at length holding my Horse by a long Leather Slip, as one who on foot was to lead my Horse all along to Monmouth, and I in that Posture to ride thereon; that troubling me, I took Mr. Arnold aside, and craved the favour the Slip might be taken away, as too ignominious, and that a Constable should only ride behind me, the rest of the Constables walking a foot about me, and this was granted; but no sooner I was gone out of Mr. Arnold's sight, when he sends his Servant to charge the Chief Constable to put the Leather Slip unto my Horses head again, and lead me as first intended, with strict Charge to be careful of me, as one charged with High Treason, though the Constable were so kind as not to do it; thus guarded, I came to Monmouth Prison, where a Friend had provided for me a good lower Room, at 14 s. a week, for Chamber, Bed, Linnen, Fire, Candle, Attendance; a high Rate, yet I was constrained thereto, otherwise I must have lain in the Common Room, amongst the Common Prisoners: Here it is observable, how that the Goaler, that very first night shewed me a Letter, that very same day dated from Mr. Arnold to him, wherein he charged the Goaler to have a severe Eye over me, and to keep constant strong Guards about the Prison, so to secure me as one of High Treason Guilt; though the very same Morning Mr. Arnold told me, as I was coming out of the Houfe, That if Mr. Sadler, that is, the Goaler, did shew me any uncivility, or severity, I should write two Lines unto him, and he would take an order with Sadler: However, all the two Months that I remained in Monmouth Prison, that is, from the 18th of November 1678. to the 13th of January 1679. in my Room I was kept close Prisoner, lock'd up at night, and barr'd up by day, though indeed Friends by day had access unto me with an Under-Keepers leave.

During this my restraint at Monmouth, these Passages were not irremarkable; soon after my Imprisonment there, a strong Rumor was spread over several Counties, with much noise, That I had broke Prison, and escaped; whereas I had not set foot over the Threshold of my Chamber all the time I was there, until my Removal to Uske, as the Goaler himself afterwards fully testified.

The like Rumor was as strongly spread, That there I had poisoned the Goaler, and this thus occasioned; He coming to my Chamber once late, and full of Drink, needs he must drink a Glas of Ale with me. I soon perceiving him far gone in Drink, and he still pressing me, why then, said I, you shall drink of my Drink, and so I filled a Glas of excellent Surfeit Water, which I had by me, mix'd with a little Brandy, I drank first, he pledg'd me; and this I did with an honest Intention to heal his Surfeit of Ale; he then liking the Liquor, needs would have more, but I earnestly desiring him to go to his Rest, out he went, and meeting his Wife, he told her that I had given him his Dose, that he found himself to swell, that his Buttons did fly, which the soon with loud cry Bruited abroad; whereas it was my Surfeit Water indeed which happily wrought with him, to the cleaning of his overcharged Stomack, else more perhaps his plentiful Ale had choaked him in Bed that night; and thus did I poison my Goaler, a Story which quickly overran five or six Counties, and took flight to London it self: Withal I add this other observation, That on Sunday Morning in Christmas Week two Magistrates came to me unexpectedly to my Chamber in Monmouth Prison, who civilly told me their busines thus, That one Bedloe had inform'd the King and Council, how Mr. Charles Price had a deep

deep hand in the late Plot, and that I had told *Bedloe* so much, meaning Mr. *Charles Price*, Servant to the Lord Marques of *Worcester*; they desired my Answer hereunto, and I desired my Oath, and upon Oath, and under my hand I gave it, that to my knowledge I never saw *Bedloe*, I never spake with him, I never had any correspondence with him directly or indirectly; I further deposed, that I never heard, I never knew any thing of the Plot, till common fame had spread it over the Countrey: These Depositions of mine were sent up to *London*, I never heard more of it since.

Our new High-Sheriff was pleased to remove the Goal from *Monmouth* to *Uske*, where, upon the 13th of January, together with the Deputy-Sheriff, and Head-Goaler, I rid from *Monmouth* to *Uske*, and it snowing that day hard, in the way we alighted at *Raglan*, to warm and refresh our selves; whiles there I was, a Messenger comes to the Door, and desires to speak with me, his busines was, That a very good Friend of mine, one Mr. *Ignatius alias Walter Price*, lay a dying about half a mile off thence, having undergone much hardship of hunger and of cold, by flying from Barn to Barn, from Cottage to Cottage, because furiously searched after as a Popish Prift, and that by his own Kinsman; he now dying, desired to see me; but I being then in no capacity to perform that friendly Office, because under the actual Custody of Officers, I only sent him my most true and best Wishes for his Souls happy Passage out of this turbulent World, to an Eternity of Rest; and on I went with my Keepers to my new Prison of *Uske*, where three days after I received the news of his Bleffed Death, and next days decent Burial at *Ragland*: Four days after that followed a Message again, That Kinsman pretending not to believe the Popish Priest really dead, he caused the Grave to be opened, and the Shroud to be slit from Head to Navil, and with others viewing the Face, he found he was the Man, and truly dead; whereas, I am credibly inform'd, the covetous Catchpole his principal aim was in this Inhumane Action, to find a large Golden Croſs, which he was falsely told, had been buried with the Body, and laid on the Dead Mans Breast; but finding no ſuch thing, and ſo disappointed of his prey, he caused the Grave to be filled up again, and departed: Being come to *Uske*, there I found ſeveral Catholicks in Prison, for refuſing the Oath of Allegiance, not but they were ready to ſwear faithful Allegiance to the King, yet that Oath they refuſed, because inſtruſted they were, that it contained ſeveral other Points, which no ſound Catholick could with ſafety of Conſcience take. In *Uske* I remained Prisoner till the great Aſſizes, which was to begin the 28th of March at *Monmouth*.

The T R I A L.

THE 28th of March 1679. the Aſſizes began at *Monmouth*, Sir *Robert Atkins* being ſole Judge, a Grand-Jury of Gentlemen was Returned by the Sheriff, and called, againſt ſeveral of whom Mr. *Arnold* and Mr. *Price* excepted, and ſo put by, as ſuch they conceived might befriend me, a Challenge not known before; for in the Case between the Marques of *Worcester*, and the Tenants of *Wentwood*, upon a Riot, *Henry Williams* Esq; and others, would have excepted againſt ſome of that Grand-Jury, the ſame Judge *Atkins* then poſitively ſaid, It was ridiculous, and not uſual to Challenge out of a Grand-Jury; at laſt a Jury was sworn, and an Indictment drawn up againſt me upon the Statute of the 27th *Eliz.* and preferred to the Grand-Jury. That Evening, being Friday, I was Arraigned upon that Bill, to which I pleaded, Not Guilty; the next day, about ten of the Clock in the Morning, the Judge came from the *Nisi prius* ſide, and ſate at the Crown ſide; and I at the ſame time being brought to the Bar, the Crier made Proclamation for silence, that a Jury for Life and Death might be Impanelled, and I made my Challenges; preſently a Jury from the other Bar was called, which was not uſual, and I to Challenge, the Judge telling me, I might Challenge without hinderance; by gueſs I Challenged three; but out of that *Nisi prius* Jury called to the Crown Bar, and that by Mr. *Arnold's* own ſuggeſtion, who had a ſtrong Influence upon the Judge, as being his Kinsman; and ſitting at his Right Hand, divers were excepted by Mr. *Arnold*; whereupon, to make up the Jury, the Judge commanded the High-Sheriff to call ſome, and he called many, and of thoſe ſtill Mr. *Arnold* excepted, as either being of my Neighbourhood, or Acquaintance, for there being many in the Country; the

the Sheriff seeing so many of his calling excepted, he desired Mr. Arnold himself should call whom he pleased ; whereat the Judge checked the Sheriff, and said he was fawcy : At last, with much difficulty, a Jury was Impanelled, a Jury now contriv'd of none but such as pleased Mr. Arnold, principal Prosecutor against me, which was very hard, and an ignorant Jury it was withal : The Jury being Impanelled, it was sworn, the Indictment read, and Witnesses called ; Thus.

Clark of the Assizes. David Lewis, hold up thy Hand.

Here thou standest Indicted of High Treason by the Name of *David Lewis*, for that thou, being a Natural Subject of the King of *England*, hast past beyond the Seas, and hast taken Orders from the Church and See of *Rome*, and hast returned back again into *England*, and continued upwards of forty days, contrary to the Statute 27 Eliz. in that Case made and provided, which by the said Statute is High Treason. What hast thou to say for thy self, art thou Guilty, or not Guilty ?

Prisoner. Not Guilty.

Clark. By whom wilt thou be Try'd ?

Prisoner. By God and my Country.

Clark. God send thee a Good Deliverance.

Clark. Cryer, call *William Price, Dorothy James, Maney Trott, John James, Katherine Thomas* ; he calls them, and they all appear ; then says the Clark to the Cryer, Swear them, and he sware them all.

Judge. *William Price*, look on the Prisoner, do you know him ?

Price. Yes, my Lord, I do know him.

Judge. What have you to say of him ?

Price. My Lord, about a year and a half ago I saw him at *Mrs. Bartlets House*, at a Place called *Castle-Morton in Worcester-shire*, and there I heard him read Mass, I was at Confession with him, and I received the Sacrament from him according to that way.

Judge. Was there any Altar, or any Crucifixes, or Coapes ?

Price. Yes, my Lord, that there were.

Judge. How many times did you see him ?

Price. But that once my Lord.

Judge. Were you of that Way then ?

Price. Yes, my Lord, upwards of eighteen years.

Judge. What are you now ?

Price. A Protestant my Lord.

Judge. Well Mr. Lewis, what have you to say to this ?

Prisoner. With your Lordships leave I will answer all together.

Judge. Very good, you do well, it will be so much the shorter. *Dorothy James*, look on the Prisoner, do you know him ?

Dorothy. Yes my Lord.

Judge. What have you to say of him ?

Dorothy. My Lord, I saw him say Mass, take Confessions, give the Sacrament, Marry, Christen, and heard him Preach in the English and Welch.

Judge. Were there Altar and Crucifixes ?

Dorothy. Yes, my Lord, Altars, Crucifixes, Chalices, and such other things belonging to that Way.

Arnold. Did you see him give that they call Extream Unction ?

Dorothy. Yes, that I did, to my Uncle, my Fathers Brother.

Judge. Do you know what Extream Unction is ?

Dorothy. Yes that I do, it is anointing sick People with Oyl, when they are dying.

Judge. It's right, that's another Sacrament of their Church, grounding themselves upon these words of St. Paul, as I take it, *If any be sick among you, let him be anointed* : But that was in times of Miracles only.

Arnold. Did he take upon him to free Souls from Purgatory ?

Dorothy. Yes that he did, and he had of me eight Pounds in Silver, and one piece of Gold, to free my Father's Soul.

Prisoner. God is my Witness, to my best knowledge I never had one single piece of any Money from her or her Husband, upon any Account whatsoever.

Judge.

Judge. Have you any more to say?

Dorothy. No my Lord, and with that she laughed at the Bar.

Judge. How now Woman, do you make a Laughing Game of it? carry your self more modest, for the Gentleman is for his Life, and it is no jesting matter. Well *William James*, look upon the Prisoner, do you know the Prisoner, and what have you to say of him?

William James. Yes, my Lord, I do know him, and I have seen him read Mass many times, and take Confessions, and give the Sacrament, and Christen, and Marry.

Judge. Have you any more to say?

William James. No my Lord.

Judge. Mr. *Trot*, what have you to say of the Prisoner, did you ever hear him read Mass, was he reputed commonly a Jesuite, or Popish Priest?

Trot. Yes, my Lord, he was commonly reputed so, and I heard him often read Mass; and I saw him marry Mr. *Gunters Daughter* to Mr. *Body*.

Judge. Were you then of that Religion?

Trot. My Lord, I was deluded by my Wife out of the Protestant Religion, and was a Papist during her life time.

Judge. Are you of that Religion still?

Trot. No, my Lord, when I saw their wicked Designs to kill my Gracious King, I abhor'd their Traiterous Proceedings, and left them, and am now a Protestant, in which I shall continue.

Judge. You do well.

Arnold. My Lord, there is Mr. *Roger Sayer*, a very material Witness.

Judge. Cryer, swear him, Mr. *Sayer*, what have you to say against the Prisoner?

Sayer. My Lord, I was employed with others on the 16th of November last to go and search for him, and we found him, and took him, with several Popish things, which we carried away, &c.

Judge. Did you see him at Mass?

Sayer. No, my Lord.

Judge. Then sit down. What have you to say *John James*? What are you dead, or afraid to be whipt? look upon me, and speak out,

John James. He married me and my Wife.

Judge. Is that all you know? did you see him at Mass?

John James. I know no more.

Judge. Katharine *Thomas*, did you see him at Mass? why do you not speak Woman? speak Woman.

Kath. Thomas. Yes. I have no more to say, do what you please with me.

Arnold. My Lord, there is one *Cornelius* in Court, I see him, who was Clark.

Judge. Cryer, call him, swear him. Well *Cornelius*, did you ever see the Prisoner at Mass?

Cornelius. I am an Ignorant Fellow, I know not what Mass is?

William James. My Lord, he was his Clark?

Cornelius. No, I was his Servant.

Judge. Well, sit down. Mr. *Lewis*, now what have you to say to all these Witnesses for your self?

Prisoner. My Lord, my Indictment was, That being a Natural Subject of the King of England, I was ordained beyond the Seas by a Jurisdiction derived from the See of Rome, and returned back again into England, &c. contrary to the Statute in that Case made and provided, 27 Eliz. Under your Lordships favour, I conceive that there has not been here any one Witness, who hath proved the Indictment, or any part thereof.

Judge. What then? Do you expect that we should search the Records at Rome, or should bring persons to prove that they saw you ordained there? No Sir, it is enough that you have exercised the Function of a Priest in Coapes and Vestments, used in your Church, and that you have read Mass, taken Confessions, given Absolutions, Married, and Christened; if all this will not make you a Priest, what will? I have tryed several Popish Priests, but never met with so full a Proof, as this now.

Prisoner. All these things supposed proved, will not make me a Priest, unless proved to be performed by me as one ordained beyond the Seas, by the Jurisdiction

derived from the See of *Rome*; for the very Ministry of the Church of *England* take special Confessions, and give formal Absolutions; many, in Case of necessity, *Christians*, though no Priests, and lately the Country knows it; one, no Popish Priest, solemnly married a Couple, neither can one prove to have seen me read Mass, unless it be proved first, That I was ordained beyond the Seas by a Jurisdiction derived from the See of *Rome*; for no such Ordination, no Priest; and no Priest, no Mass.

Judge. To disprove all these Witnesses, by saying it cannot be proved you were ordained beyond the Seas, by a Jurisdiction derived from the See of *Rome*, is as much, as that saying *Bellarmino* thou lyest.

Prisoner. My Lord, were it proved that I read Mass, that were not Treason in me, for I am inform'd, that it were but the Forfeiture of 200 Marks by a Statute of 23 Eliz.

Judge. 'Tis true, who bears Mass, forfeits one hundred Marks, But be that uses to read it, commits Treason. But these are the Tricks of you all, yet all will not do, have you any thing else to say?

Prisoner. With your Lordships leave, now I desire to speak something to the Evidence of every particular Witness.

Judge. Speak then,

Prisoner. My Lord, as to the first Witness, *Price*: As I hope to be saved, to the best of my memory, I never saw him, till this very day, before. I never knew or heard before now, of that Mrs. *Bartlet*, or of that Place *Castle-morton*; I never was in that Place all my life-time; nay, I never was in *Worcester-shire*, or in any House in *Worcester-shire*, but twice, the last time whereof was about five years ago; and that was but at my Inn in *Worcester Town*, where, with a Servant, I alighted, bespoke my Supper, went to the Coffee-house, drank two dishes of Coffee, read the Gazer, returned to my Inn again, supped, went to bed, next morning bought some few Books at the Stationers, dined, took Horse, returned home again: This is all the being I ever was in *Worcester-shire*.

Judge. Look upon him, do you know him?

Price. Yes, my Lord, he is the Man.

Judge. Have you any more to say?

Prisoner. Yes, my Lord, Mr. *Trot* was married to a Kinswoman of mine, and she was a considerable Fortune to him; which he having spent very idly, and she dying, he went to *London*, where finding an Employment at Court, and there having done some unhandsome things, he was banished the Court, and now lives upon the Charity of Gentlemen and Friends for his Bread; so that with good reason it may be believed it is rather Poverty and hope of Gain, than any thing else, that brings him here to accuse me.

Judge. *Panitia ad Turpia Cogit.* * Little Gentleman, what can you say to this?

Trot. My Lord, I was over with the King, and He commanded me to attend Him at *Whitehall* on his Restoration, where I came when I returned, and I was received into His Service, but was never banished the Court, only I came away upon discontent, and still I may go there when I please: My Lord, I am desirous to do my King and Country good Service, but I am in danger of my life amongst them, and must look to my self.

Judge. I Mr. *Trot*, have a care of your self, yo do well. Mr. *Lewis*, have you any more to say for your self?

Prisoner. My Lord, *Dorothy James*, and *William James* her Husband, their Evidence is grounded upon plain malice, and that malice thus grounded; They pretending I owed them Money, they sued me in *Chancery*; but after a considerable Charge at Law, finding themselves not like to prevail, then they fell to threatening me, that they would have me in hand, that they would make me repented, that they would never give over to prosecute against me, till she had washed her hands in my Hearts Blood, and made Pottage of my Head.

Judge. Can you prove that?

Prisoner. Yes, my Lord, that I can.

Judge. Call your Witnesses then.

Prisoner. Cryer, call *Richard Jones*, *Anne William*, *Anne James*, and *Katherine Cornelius*.

Judge. What can you say *Richard Jones*?

Richard

* He was a Dwarf.

Richard Jones. I heard *William James* say, he would make Mr. *Lewis* repent.

Judge. *Anne William,* what can you say?

Anne William. I heard from several Persons, that *Dorothy James* said to several Persons in and about *Carlton*, that she would wash her hands in Mr. *Lewis* his Blood, and that she would have his Head to make Pottage of, as of a Sheeps head.

Kath. Cornelius. My Lord, and I heard the same.

Judge. *Anne James,* what can you say?

Anne James. I heard *Dorothy James* swear that she would wash her hands in Mr. *Lewis's* Hearts Blood.

Judge. Where did you hear her say so?

Anne James. I heard her say so in her own House, at the fire side, when I lived with her.

Judge. Well Mr. *Lewis*, all this will not do, all will not excuse you from being a Priest, or were you a Hypocrite?

Prisoner. My Lord, I am a Native of this Country.

Judge. What, of this Country?

Prisoner. Yes, my Lord, of this Country, and those years I lived in this Country, I lived with the reputation of an honest Man amongst all honest Gentlemen and Neighbours.

Judge. Well, Mr. *Lewis*, have you any more to say?

Prisoner. My Lord, Mr. *Sayes* was one sworn Witness against me, I desire to ask him one Question.

Judge. Do so.

Prisoner. Mr. *Sayes*, when you took me, was there a Justice of Peace with you at taking of me?

Sayes. No.

Prisoner. My Lord, with this opportunity I humbly beg leave to clear my self from a foul Aspersion, wherewith I am callumniated over the whole Nation in a Printed Pamphlet, which Pamphlet I can here produce; and wherein there is not one Line of Truth. For it says at the end of it, that I was taken by a Justice of Peace, and others in a Place cunningly contriv'd under a Clay Floor, which Mr. *Sayes* knows to be untrue; and whereas it alleages, That I cheated a poor woman of thirty Pounds, to redeem her Fathers Soul out of Purgatory, the Pamphlet names neither the Woman, nor her Husband, nor her Father, nor the place nor time, when nor where.

Judge. Does it not?

Prisoner. No my Lord, so that the whole Pamphlet is one entire Lye, devised by some foolish malice.

Judge. Mr. *Lewis*, I, for my part, do not believe it to be true; have you any more to say?

Prisoner. No more my Lord.

Judge. Then withdraw and repose; Gentlemen of the Jury here he stands Indicted, &c. (and sum'd up the whole Evidence) if you believe what the Witnesses swore, you must find the Prisoner guilty of High Treason, you have heard what was proved against him; therefore go together.

Prisoner. My Lord, before the Jury go, I desire to speak something, which now occurs unto me, and is material against the Evidence of *Price*.

Judge. Jury stay.

Prisoner. This very morning that *Price* came to my Chamber with the Goaler, it seems it was to view me; he took a Turn about the Room, all the time eying me; at his going out he was ask'd by the Goaler, whether I was the Man he meant, and he answered, if I was he, I was much changed, and if I was he, I had black short curled hair.

Judge. Can you prove that?

Prisoner. Yes my Lord.

Judge. Where are your Witnesses?

Prisoner. Cryer, call *Elizabeth Jones* and *Charles Edwards*.

Judge. Woman, what can you say to this?

Eliz. Jones. My Lord, *Price* this morning, after he had viewed the Gentleman in his Chamber, as he was going out he said, If he be the Man, he is much changed, and hath black curled short hair, which is not so.

Judge.

THE Last SPEECH OF

*Mr. David Lewis, Priest of the Society of Jesus,
who was Executed as a Priest only, at Uske in
Monmouth-shire, on the 27th day of August,
Anno Domini 1679.*

Here is a numerous Assembly, I see, the Great Saviour of the World save every Soul of you all; I believe you are here met not only to see a Fellow-native die, but also with expectation to hear a dying Fellow-Native speak. If you expected it not, at least I intended it, I hope the favour will not be denied me, it being a favour so freely granted to several late dying persons in London it self; I shall endeavour to speak inoffensively; I hope the same favour will not be denied me.

Let none of you suffer as a Murderer or a Thief, but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; St. Peters words in his 1. Ep. Chap. 4. Ver. 15, 16. *I hope by Gods Holy Spirit now whispered to my memory, and that to my abundant Consolation; for I suffer not as a Murderer, Thief, or such like Malefactor, but as a Christian, and therefore am not ashamed.*

I distinguish two sorts of Life on Earth, Life-moral, and Life-natural; Life-moral is that by which we live with good Repute in the Esteem of other Men of Integrity; Life-natural is that by which we breath; in the first sort or kind, I thank God I have suffered lately, and exceedingly, when maliciously, falsely, and most injuriously, I was branded for a publick Cheat, in Vid. Epilogue
Pamphlet, in Ballad, on Stage, and that in the Head City of the Kingdom, to Caesar Bor-
yea and over the whole Nation, to the huge and great detriment of my good
Name, which I always was as tender of, as the other I am now quitting.
Nat. Lee.

The Pamphletical Story (believe my dying words) had no truth in it, neither to Substance nor Circumstance of the thing, a Story so false, that I could have easily defied the Face that had attempted to justifie it to my Face; so sordid a Busines, a Story so ridiculous, that I wonder how any sober Christian, at least who knew me, could as much as incline to believe so open an Improbability; who that Protestant young Man there mention'd was, I know not; who that Popish young Woman, who the Father dead a year and a half before, what County, what Parish, where all transacted, I know not, none of all these there particularized; and when in the face of the Country at last Lent Assizes, I vindicated my Innocency herein, to the satisfaction of the then Judge himself, why appeared not there then some one to make good the Charge, and disable my Defence? but none of this offer'd, a plain demonstra-
tion to all Candid Minds, the whole was a mere fiction of some malicious per-
son against me: God forgive them or him, I heartily do. How forward my Endeav-

Endeavours always have been to my power to relieve the Poor, and not directly to defraud them, Impartial Neighbours that know me can tell you ; besides this, during my nine months Imprisonment, several foul and false Aspersions were cast out against me, and that by those unto whom, for full thirty years, I had been charitably serviceable : God forgive them, I heartily do ; yet notwithstanding all these Calumnies, I hope I shall retain the Character of an Honest Man among Gentlemen of Worth, with whom I conversed, and with all Neighbours of Honesty, with and amongst whom I lived.

And now I am parting with the other Life by which I breath, behold, that within these few Moments of Time is to unbreathe me ; but why thus sledg'd to this Country Tyburne ? why this so untimely Death of mine ? have patience and I'll tell you, not for any plotting I assure you, and what I shall now say as to that, God is my Witness, I shall speak without any Equivocation, Mental Reservation, or Palliation of Truth whatsoever.

By all that is Sacred in Heaven and Earth, I here solemnly protest, that I am as innocent from any Plot whatever against His Majesties Person or Government, as the Infant that left the Mothers Womb but yesterday ; neither did I ever hear or know any thing directly or indirectly of any such Plot, till publick fame had spread it over the Country between Michaelmas and All-Saints day last : This is true, as God shall judge and save my Soul ; neither was there any guilt of any such black Crime found in me by Mr. Oates, Mr. Bedloe, Mr. Dugdale, and Mr. Prance, when by them I was strictly examined on that Point last May in Newgate, London ; nay, had I had the least knowledge or hint of such Plot, I had been as zealously nimble in the discovery of it, as any the most Loyal Subject His Majesty hath in His three Kingdoms ; wherefore when I am dead and gone, if some malevolent give out I lose my Life for Plotting, by Charity prove to disengage him of his mistake, do that Right to my dead Ashes, born blind in mind, and lost

I was never taught this Doctrine of King-killing, from my Soul I detest and abhor it as execrable, and directly opposite to the Principles of the Religion I profess, what that is you shall know by and by ; it being the positive definition of the Council of Constance, That it is damnable for any Subject or private person, or any Subjects in Council joined, to murmur his or their Lawful King or Prince, or use any publick or clandestine Conspiration against Him, though the said King or Prince were a Turk, Apostate, Persecutor, yea or a Tyrant in Government : Never tell me of Clement the Murderer of Henry the 3d of France ; never tell me of Ravilliacke, Murderer of Henry the 4th of France ; they did so, but wickedly they did so, and for it they were punished to severity, as Malefactors ; and for it to this very day are stigmatized by all Roman Catholicks for very Miscreants and Villains : I hope you will not charge the whole Roman Catholick Body with the Villanies of some few Desperadoes ? by that Rule all Christianity must be answerable for the Treason of Judas ; for my part, I always loved my King, I always honoured His Person, and I daily prayed for His Prosperity ; and now, with all unsainted Cordiality, I say it, God bless my Gracious King and Lawful Prince, Charles the Second, King of England, and Prince of Wales, God bless Him Temporally and Eternally, God preserve Him from all His real Enemies, God direct Him in all His Councils, that may tend to the greater Glory of the same Great God ; and whatever late Plot hath been, or is, the Father of Lights bring it to light, the Contrivers of it, and the Actors in it, that such may be brought to their condign punishment, and Innocence preserved.

But

But why again this untimely Death? my Religion is the Roman Catholick Religion, in it I have lived above these forty years, in it I now die, and so fixedly die, that if all the good things in this World were offered me to renounce it, all should not move me one hairs breadth from my Roman Catholick Faith, a Roman Catholick I am, a Roman Catholick Priest I am, a Roman Catholick Priest of that Religious Order called the Society of Jesus I am, and I bless God who first called me, and I bless the hour in which I was first called both unto Faith and Function.

Please now to observe, I was condemned for reading Mass, hearing Confessions, Administiring the Sacraments, Anointing the Sick, Christening, Marrying, Preaching: As for reading the Mass, it was the old, and still is, the accustomed and Laudable Liturgy of the Holy Church, and all the other Acts, which are Acts of Religion, tending to the Worship of God; and for this dying, I dye for Religion: Moreover know, that when last May I was in London under examination concerning the Plot, a prime Examinant told me, That to save my Life, and increase my Fortunes, I must make some discovery of the Plot, or Conform; discover Plot I could not, for I knew of none; Conform I would not, because it was against my Conscience, then by consequence I must dye, and so now dying, I dye for Conscience and Religion; and dying upon such good scores, as far as humane frailty permits, I dye with Alacrity Interior and Exterior; from the abundance of the Heart, let not only Mouths, but Faces also speak.

Here methinks I feel Flesh and Blood ready to burst into loud Cries, Tooth for Tooth, Eye for Eye, Blood for Blood, Life for Life; No, cryeth Holy Gospel, Forgive and you shall be forgiven; Pray for those that persecute you; Love your Enemies; and I profess my self a Child of the Gospel, and the Gospel I obey.

Whomever, present or absent, I have ever offended, I humbly desire them to forgive me; as for my Enemies, had I as many Hearts as I have Fingers, with all those Hearts would I forgive my Enemies, at least-wise with all that single Heart I have, I freely forgive them all, my Neighbours that betrayer me, the Persons that took me, the Justices that Committed me, the Witnesses that proved against me, the Jury that found me, the Judge that Condemned me, and others who ever, that out of malice or zeal, covertly or openly, have been contributive to my Condemnation; but singularly and especially I forgive my Capital Persecutor, who hath been so long thirsting after my Blood, from my Soul I forgive him, and wish his Soul so well, that were it in my power, I would seat him a Seraphim in Heaven, and I pray for them in the Language of Glorious St. Stephen the Protomartyr; Lord, lay not this sin unto them; or better yet, in the Style of our Great Master Christ himself, Father forgive them, they know not what they do.

And with Reason I love them also; for though they have done themselves a vast Soul-prejudice, yet they have done me an incomparable favour, which I shall eternally acknowledge; but chiefly I love them for his sake, who said, Love your Enemies; and in Testimony of my Love, I wish them, and it is the best of Wishes, from the Center of my Soul, I wish them a good Eternity: O Eternity! Eternity! How momentanean are the Glories, Riches, and Pleasures of this World? and how desirable art thou Endless Eternity?

And for my said Enemies attaining thereunto, I humbly beseech God to give them the Grace of true Repentance before they and this World part.

Next to my Enemies, give me leave to lift up my Eyes, Hands, and Heart to Heaven, and drop some few Words of Advice unto, and for my Friends, as well those present as absent. Friends, Fear God, Honour your King, be firm in your Faith, avoid Mortal Sin, by frequenting the Sacraments of Holy Church, patiently bear your Persecutions and Afflictions, Forgive your Enemies, your Sufferings are great, I say be firm in your Faith to the end, yea even to Death, then shall you hearken unto your selves Celestial Treasures in the Heavenly Jerusalem, where no Thief Robbeth, no Moth Eateth, and no Rust Consumeth; and have that Blessed Saying of the Blessed St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, always in your memory, which I heartily recommend unto you, viz. Let none of you suffer as a Murderer or Thief, but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorifie God in his Name.

Now it is high time I make my Addresses to Heaven, and supplicate the Divine Goodness in my own behalf, by some few short and Cordial Ejaculations of Prayers.

Sovereign Lord God, Eternal Father of Heaven, Creator of all, Conserver of all, sole Author of Grace and Glory, with prostrate Heart I Adore thee, and thee only I Adore as God, the Giving of Divine Honour to any Creature of highest degree, I abhor and detest as damnable Idolatry.

Incarnate Son of God, True God, Thou hast purchased a Church here upon Earth with thy Sacred Blood, and planted it with thy Sacred Labours, a Church, One, Holy, Catholick, and Apostolick, a Church to continue to the Consummation of the World: Whatever that Church of thine hath by Revelation from thee, whatever that Church of thine hath taught me, and commanded me to believe, I believe it to an Jota.

God Holy Ghost, who maketh thy Sun to shine on Good and Bad, thy Rain to fall on the Just and Unjust, I praise thy Holy Name, and thank thee for the Innumerable Benefits thou hast been pleased to bestow and confer upon me, thy unworthy Servant, the threescore and three years I now have lived on Earth.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Charity of God, and the Communication of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen, 2 Cor. 13. Chap. 14. Verse.

The Peace of God that passeth all understanding, keep your Hearts and Minds in the Knowledge and Love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the Blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you all, and always, Amen.

O Holy Trinity, three Persons, and one God, from the bottom of my Heart, I am sorry that ever I have offended thee my Good God, even to an Idle Word; yet through the Mercy of thee, my God, and Merits of my Redeemer, I strongly hope for an Eternal Salvation.

Sweet Jesus Receive my Soul.

And so was Executed.

F I N I S.